Our Latest Invasion

: AN ACCOUNT OF THE :
INFLUX OF ROMAN CATHOLIC
ORDERS INTO GREAT BRITAIN

By
David Williamson.

OUR LATEST INVASION

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THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY

THE CLOSING OF THE CONVENT SCHOOLS, LAVALLOIS-PERRET.

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An Account of the Influx of Roman Catholic Orders into Great Britain

By

DAVID WILLIAMSON

London

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY

4 Bouverie Street and 65 St. Paul's Churchyard, E.C.

NOTE

In response to many requests, the following chapters, revised and rearranged, have been reprinted from the pages of the *Sunday at Home*.

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

OUR LATEST INVASION

CHAPTER I

WHY THE ORDERS HAD TO LEAVE FRANCE

DURING the last few years there has been a silent tide of Roman Catholic Orders flowing into this country, attracting too little attention from those who are unaware of the tenets and methods pursued by these foreign religionists. All over the land there have been built numerous 'religious houses,' free from any inspection and with their residents exempt from the ordinary duties exacted from citizens of this country.

Lately the flow has been increased in volume by the expulsion from France of monks and nuns belonging to various Orders which have refused to comply with the

requirements of the Government. Week by week these communities, which have been considered a peril to the State, have crossed the Channel and settled in different parts of England, adding to the very large number of foreign Roman Catholics who have long enjoyed the hospitality of Great Britain without rendering any account of themselves in the way prescribed by law for the ordinary citizen. Whether they constitute a menace to the commonwealth can only be deduced from a study of their past behaviour in other lands. In this chapter I will give the various steps which led to the passing of the Law causing their retreat from France.

For the benefit of those readers who have not followed the history of the Parliamentary movement which has preceded the exodus of the Orders from France, it will be necessary to trace the history of the Associations Act. Before Gambetta uttered the memorable phrase, *Le cléricalisme, voilà l'ennemi*, there had been an undercurrent of hostility to the Catholic Orders in France. The Republican party has considered the clerics as a perpetual source of danger to the State, chiefly because, they say, the Orders have never accepted the principle

of a republic, and because they have interfered more and more with commercial matters and spread ideas contrary to the Republic. There has also been a certain amount of jealousy generated by the steady, quiet growth in numbers and wealth of the religious Orders; and it became a popular political cry to propose that stern measures should be meted out to them.

In 1901 the Associations Bill was introduced into the French Chamber, and its provisions excited immediate and intense feeling. The purpose of the Bill was to bring all associations under the Law, requiring them, under penalty of dissolution, to be registered, and make public their articles of association and rules of procedure. The Bill further proposed to limit the property of the Orders in real estate to 'that necessary for the object which they may have in view.' One clause, which was fought tooth and nail, was to the effect that the property of unauthorised religious communities should be appropriated to a superannuation fund for workmen. This clause was abandoned during the progress of the Bill through the Chamber. Finally, the Bill as amended was passed by 303 to

224 votes on March 29. It was voted on June 23 by the Senate, with the following amendment: 'An allocation out of the assets remaining over after the deductions stipulated, in capital or under the form of an annual income, shall be made to the members of the dissolved Order, who have no sure and regular means of existence, or who can prove that they have contributed to the acquisition of the common riches of the order.' The statute was promulgated in the *Journal Officiel* for July 2, 1901.

Three months later, it was announced officially that out of the 16,468 religious establishments in France 2001 male, and 6799 female, communities had applied for authorisation under the new Act, on the last day appointed for such applications. This left 7668 communities liable to dissolution, and immediately these religious bodies began to leave France, settling in various parts of the world. Most of the Orders which asked for permission to remain were strictly religious, and were granted the assent of the Government. But the Orders which have immersed themselves in trades—such as the manufacturers of wines, the makers of patent medicines, and brewers—were refused permission.

The passing of the Act was due in a great degree to the firmness of the Prime Minister, M. Combes, who controlled his majority in Parliament with consummate ability. M. Combes has given this interesting piece of autobiography: 'I was the son of a modest artisan whose sole fortune consisted of ten children. My father had the happy idea of opening an inn, and this might have enriched him had not an uncle, who was a *curé*, perceived that at the hour of divine service the peasants were too ready to desert the altar for the bar. He insisted that the establishment should be closed, offering in return to pay for my education at the neighbouring seminary. When I left it, my father was dead and my brothers were without means. I found a post at the College of the Assumptionists at Nîmes, and there composed my thesis for the doctorate on St. Thomas Aquinas. By the time I was a doctor, I was no longer a Christian. That, I think, was the greatest miracle that the good St. Thomas ever performed.'

All M. Combes's subsequent observation of the working of monastic institutions confirmed his distrust of them, and from the moment when the Associations Bill was introduced into the

French Parliament he never looked back. He withdrew the salaries of the prelates who concocted a collective note to the Pope—an act which is contrary to the Concordat existing between the Vatican and the French Government. Sometimes the action of the Government was so severe that it pressed hardly upon the innocent, as when a nun provided with a diploma, who had left her Order, was not permitted to start a school because of her former connection with an Order. Frenchmen have latterly resented the influence exerted by the Orders in education, and there has been considerable support accorded to the Government in its drastic treatment of the members of Orders who controlled schools. The teachers have glorified intolerance and refrained from advocating freedom, while claiming freedom for themselves. In France, as in other countries, the priests have been shrewd enough to seize the advantage of training the children, knowing full well that the ideas inculcated in youth remain through a long life. As one writer put it in a recent novel: 'Whatever may be the theology about which a man argues and contends, it is the theology of his childhood upon which he acts.'

One must, in common fairness, admit that the labours of many of the teachers have been self-denying, and have won for them the devotion of their scholars. When the time arrived for putting the Act into force, the monks and nuns were urged to defy the Law, but they quitted thousands of schools without loss of dignity, though in some cases there was a histrionic display peculiarly French in its character. For instance, in the case of the St. Ambrose school in Paris, a priest declared that the nuns would not leave without compulsion. Thereupon, the officer touched each of them lightly upon the shoulder—as much a matter of form as when the Serjeant-at-Arms removes a 'named' M.P. from our House of Commons—and the nuns left the building immediately!

One of the first speeches delivered by M. Combes, when he became Premier, in June, 1902, contained the assertion that the Associations Act would be administered with firmness. Later in the same month there was a long debate in the Chamber as to the closing of 135 Roman Catholic schools for infringing the Act. The Premier said that the Government was determined to secure

the definite victory of lay society over monastic disobedience; and a resolution approving of this determination was carried by a large majority.

In July, the closing scenes of the session were full of excitement. In order to evade the new Act, 2500 schools had been passed over to laymen, who had retained the former Catholic teachers. This was considered contrary to the spirit, if not the letter of the Act. The Archbishop of Paris and certain bishops protested against this decision, but in vain; the Government stood firm. In fifty-eight departments the schools were closed voluntarily, but in other cases there were dramatic scenes, especially in Brittany. Military officers who had refused to carry out the expulsion of monks and nuns were court-martialled and struck off the army list.

It might have been expected that practical sympathy would have been shown by British co-religionists to the Roman Catholics in France. But judging from the following extract from an article in the *Catholic Times*, not much was felt. This leading Roman Catholic journal said in the spring of 1903:—

'French Catholics are a poor lot, as their apathy and indifference have shown, and to expect them to

pay for the support of their priests and bishops is to expect to gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles. Without a subsidy from the State . . . religion would shrivel up like a starfish on a sunbeaten shore. The clergy would starve, their parishes dwindle, and within a couple of decades, three-fourths of the churches be vacant of ministers and worshippers. . . . Her bishops are dumb, and sometimes deaf; her priests are frequently blind as well. To the world crying out for an answer to its pressing problems, they turn only too often a deaf ear; or when they do speak, use a language that is no longer intelligible.'

That might be mistaken easily for the statement of an opponent of the Roman Catholic Church, for it lays bare the failure of the Church to meet the needs of this generation with painful directness, and it emphasises the weakness of a Church which can only stand upright when it is supported by the State. When a Roman Catholic organ like the *Catholic Times* states that within twenty years three quarters of the churches in France (minus State subsidies) will be empty of ministers and worshippers, surely Protestants may renew their exertions on behalf of what they believe to be the truth, and not accept the glowing reports circulated by Roman Catholics as to the wonderful increase of their cause in Europe.

If France is in this state, what about Austria, where the 'Los von Rom' movement has been so remarkable, and what about the weak position of Roman Catholics in Italy, the home of the Vatican? Belgium has lately awakened to the dangers of the priest becoming paramount in education. Up to recently, French religious bodies have been allowed to settle in any part of Belgium. But in April, 1903, the French Government made representations, with the result that the Bishop of Tournay issued an edict suppressing the school which had been built by the Dames de la Sainte-Union in Belgium. Similar strong measures were taken with regard to a school in the diocese of Bruges, which had been started by an expelled Order. In the words of a competent authority: 'The Roman Catholic Church among the Latin races is steadily and rapidly losing ground and influence, the result of Jesuitry and Vaticanism.'

It is probable that the Associations Law would not have been compiled in so stringent a manner had it not been for the revelations made in connexion with the Dreyfus case. The hatred of Jews was fostered by the priests by all the means in their power. A writer in

The Times gives an instance: 'A few months ago, as the congregation of the most fashionable church in one of the largest towns in France was leaving after High Mass, each person was handed at the church door a list of all the Jews carrying on business in the town—a boycott list given out with the approval of the *curé*.' Mr. F. C. Conybeare, writing in *The Times* in reply to the late Cardinal Vaughan, gave a long list of the papers written and patronised by French bishops and clergy, 'which have done their best to hound to death the innocent man,' adding, 'not a single clerical or Latin Catholic paper in France, Italy, or Belgium, but has swelled the chorus of calumny and insult,' with the exception of *Le Soleil*.

That was written in 1899, when the historic trial at Rennes had drawn the eyes of the civilised world to the pitiable figure of Captain Dreyfus. In the following year came the proceedings against the Assumptionist Fathers which resulted in the dissolution of that confraternity. In the striking words of the leader-writer in *The Times*, this trial and verdict

'fixes upon the Assumptionists the stigma of being active plotters against the well-being and tranquillity of the commonwealth. . . . The Assumptionist

Fathers, of course, profess to be a religious organisation working for spiritual ends. As a matter of fact, there is nothing religious about them, except the fact that they are ecclesiastics. They are a political organisation working to extend the influence of the Church of Rome over the French Army and the French Legislature. . . . In the pursuit of their secular ends they acknowledge no restraints of patriotism, of morality, or of religion. They habitually descend to the use of methods condemned as corrupt and base by ordinary men of the world making no pretence whatever to spirituality. Their chief agency is the infamous *La Croix*, rightly described some time ago by our Paris correspondent as "the most abominable newspaper published in the French language." . . . Efforts have naturally been made to dissociate the Church from the operations of these zealous servants. But such efforts are rather difficult to sustain in view of the evident complaisance of the clergy all over France, and still more in view of the fact that Father Bailly, the director of *La Croix*, was not long ago received by the Pope himself with marks of especial favour. The Pope is too well advised to make it easily credible that he was unaware of the nature of the work carried on by the man he thus distinguished, who, by the way, promptly utilised the distinction as an advertisement of his journal. . . . There is not in the action of the French Government any trace of religious intolerance. It is dealing simply with political agents aiming at the subversion of society, employing the most scandalous and immoral methods, and using their ecclesiastical

status simply as a cloak to disguise their real character, and a means of envenoming the dagger they seek to plunge into the side of the body politic.'—*The Times*, January 25, 1900.

Has there been a more telling indictment against Jesuits than the foregoing passages which, please remember, did not appear in some hyper-Protestant organ, but in the greatest newspaper in the word—*The Times!* On the premises of the Assumptionists the Public Prosecutor found cash to the amount of 800,000 francs, proving that they had plenty of funds to carry on their infamous work. The open patronage accorded by the Pope removed the last vestige of proof from the assertions made as to the independence of the Assumptionists. The man whom the Pope delighted to honour was the director of *La Croix*, so that it is futile for Roman Catholics to claim that the Assumptionists' journal was not under the ægis of Rome. It had a circulation of a quarter of a million copies in Paris alone; it was sold in the porches of Roman Catholic churches, under the authority of the priests; and its articles represented undoubtedly the views of countless numbers of the clergy, though one hopes that they would be

repudiated by self-respecting citizens of the Republic. The sacred symbol which the newspaper assumed as its title was never attached to a more unworthy object.

On the day of the election of Pius X., this newspaper started a subscription to buy the Pope a present. In two days 10,000 francs were despatched to the Papal Nuncio for this purpose. In reply came this gracious letter from Pius X., accompanied by his benediction:

'I have for some time known and loved *La Croix*. I bless with all my heart its director and its editorial staff, his office servants and printers, its readers and their families in France.' This unique compliment is paid to a paper which is conducted by men described by *The Times* as 'political agents aiming at the subversion of society.' Is it not a conclusive proof of the necessity for the recent legislation expelling such religious Orders from France 'employing'—to quote *The Times* again—'the most scandalous and immoral methods?' Is it not a reason why the incursion into this country of such enemies of the State should be watched most carefully?

I would like to emphasise the point made by *The Times* as to the danger to the body

politic of such Orders, when they exist free from any restraint. That is, after all, the cause of this action of the French Government. Under the guise of religion these men were plotting against the State, as their predecessors through the ages have been plotting, and they will not cease to be a danger because they are dissolved as an Order in France. It is on these grounds that the incursion of foreign Orders into our own country has become a grave menace to the well-being of the land. We rejoice in our freedom, but it is only freedom to do right; we take pride in the right of every citizen to worship God as his conscience may dictate. But immediately men overstep such limits and commence plotting against the commonweal of the nation, then we are bound to resist to the uttermost. As Philip said, in the reign of John, 'The realm of England never was St. Peter's patrimony; it is not so now, and never shall be.'

CHAPTER II

THE TRAGIC STORY OF MARIA LECOANET

ANOTHER cause of hostility to the Orders was undoubtedly the revelations of the case of the Convent of the Good Shepherd, at Nancy. The final verdict in this *cause célèbre*, which had been before the Courts for some years, was only delivered on February 28, 1903, by the First Chamber of the Court of Appeal at Nancy. I will summarise as briefly as possible the facts of what will prove a historic case.

It was an action brought by Mademoiselle Maria Lecoanet against the nuns of the Convent of the Good Shepherd for injury to her health, compulsory detention against her will, and overwork causing complete destruction of her eyesight. She had first claimed 20,000 francs (£800) as damages, and in the final trial was awarded £400 and full costs—the costs

on both sides would amount to thousands of pounds. The story of Maria Lecoanet, which, I fear, may be taken as a sample of many other ill-used inmates of convents in France and elsewhere, is as follows.

Having been left an orphan, Maria Lecoanet was placed by her aunt and her sister, in 1871, in the Convent of the Good Shepherd, at Nancy. She soon became exceptionally expert at embroidery, which was one of the chief employments of the girls in the convent. After six years, her health became impaired by her close application to work, and she left the convent for a rest. When she had been absent about six months, the nuns wrote urging her to return, for they had begun to value her services. She agreed, and from 1877 onwards she became virtually a prisoner in the convent. The Court pronounced its opinion on the charge that she was detained against her will in these words: 'It is beyond all doubt that upon this point a decisive proof has been made.' Indeed, the chaplain of the convent stated, 'It is the fact, that the *pensionnaires* are immured.' Even the natural affection of the inmates for their relatives was ignored. The Bishop of Nancy said: 'To the inquiry, "Tell me, at any rate, if any of my

family still live," no answer was made, any more than to their request reiterated a hundred times, a thousand times, for leave to quit the establishment.'

Once inside the walls of the convent the unhappy girls were prisoners for life. One witness testified: 'One night when I was urgently begging to be allowed to go away, she (Mother Mont-Carmel) said, "One of these days, I will throw the doors wide open, and you will go out feet foremost," adding, "You know what that means." I answered, "You mean when I am in my coffin. I do not mind dying, but I will not stay here."' Could there be a more terrible proof of the terrorism under which these girls were kept? All Maria Lecoanet's letters for four or five years, while she was trying to reach the outside world, were intercepted, and it was only when she threw herself on the compassion of the chaplain that she managed to get a letter conveyed to her sister, entreating her to remove her from the convent. This chaplain was at last convinced of the misery of the inmates, for he said to his successor, 'I wish you a happier lot than mine. I have been here ten years, and they were really ten years in the galleys.'

The third count in the indictment was that of gross overwork. The *pensionnaires*, it was testified, had to rise at 4.30 a.m., and it was often midnight before they were permitted to throw down their work and snatch a brief respite from their tedious labour. The Bishop of Nancy—who, remember, is a Roman Catholic bishop, with no object to serve by arraigning his co-religionists, save that of obtaining justice—stated to the Court: 'I have said, and I repeat, that there is not in the whole country an unbelieving employer, be he Jew or Freemason, who thus exploits his workmen and workwomen, and treats them as these nuns treat the young girls whom they pretend to receive from charitable motives.'

As an instance of how the nuns carried out their policy of incessant work, one witness said that 'we were constantly preached at, and told that if we did not work hard we should be damned.' The girls were encouraged to do extra work for the private benefit of the nuns, and these tasks were supposed to earn for them religious advantages. Mademoiselle Marchal, one of the sixty-five witnesses called at the last trial, said, 'If one of us did not finish her task, she was deprived of food, and

compelled to beg on her knees for a spoonful of soup from each of her comrades.'

Maria Lecoanet, ill as she was, prepared the embroidery exhibit which gained the prize for the convent at the Paris Exhibition in 1889. The thousands of eyes which scrutinised the exquisite workmanship of the exhibit never imagined what a tragedy of waning sight, and miserable imprisonment and mental sorrow, had been interwoven in that dainty filigree. The threads had been drawn from a poor girl's heart, and tears from eyes which were soon to be sightless had fallen as she plied her needle. She had now to wear a bandage over her eyes, and to be led to and fro the chapel; yet still the nuns kept her at the money-making employment, and called in no oculist to see the poor girl.

The inmates of this convent had no comfort in their life, for the conditions under which they lived were absolutely disgraceful. I have read the evidence in French, and cannot attempt to give many of the details. Suffice it to say that the girls were only provided with a change of linen about once in three weeks, and were quite debarred from proper ablutions all the year. When Maria Lecoanet obtained her

release, she was sent back to her relatives in exactly the same clothes as she had worn when she entered the convent. They did not recognise in the physical wreck the bright clever girl who had entered the convent seventeen years before. She was completely blind, and her health was deplorable. But—let me not forget it !—she had a certificate from the nuns to this effect : ' We certify that Maria Lecoanet was seventeen years in our establishment for young girls. During her stay in the house her conduct was always good in every respect.' So that disposes of the charge which has often been made in similar cases, that the prosecuting party was unsatisfactory in character. The nuns are compelled, even when they are forced to give up the poor girl, to admit that her conduct had been exemplary.

But what was the use of a certificate, when the bearer of it returned to her relatives with her chances of gaining a living damaged almost irretrievably ? Of course, she took with her not a penny for these seventeen years of faithful unremitting toil—all the gain had gone to the ' good sisters,' and some portion of their receipts had been sent to Rome to the Pope, who, we charitably imagine, could

have no real idea of how the money was obtained.

Maria Lecoanet gained the sympathy of a warm-hearted Irish family who took pity on the young woman, and received her into their home. She improved in health under their kind treatment, and they obtained proper medical advice and caused an oculist to examine her eyes. These good Samaritans were Roman Catholics, so that, as in the case of the witnesses to the cruelty practised in the convent, there is no suggestion of an anti-Catholic bias. They have put these words on record: 'We are fervent Catholics. . . . We have suffered much from seeing to what condition a religious institution had reduced this unhappy girl, without even taking interest in her fate.' Proceedings were commenced against the convent, but for some time justice was delayed if not thwarted. Finally on February 28, 1903, the verdict was delivered in Maria Lecoanet's favour. As a proof of the profound sensation produced by the case, I may add that within twelve days of the end of the trial, the whole of the 171 girls in this particular convent were removed by order of the Government.

I will forestall any suggestions as to this being an isolated case of cruelty by quoting once more from Monsignor Turinaz, the valiant Bishop of Nancy, who persisted in bringing these offenders to justice with a courage all the greater when it is remembered that he had petitioned the Vatican twice in vain. Though his urgent representations to the Roman Catholic authorities at Rome were supported by several French archbishops and bishops, there was only a deaf ear turned to the woes of these suffering girls. He says: 'I am inclined to believe that what is happening here is also happening in a great number of houses belonging to this Order—perhaps in all of them.'

The Order of the Good Shepherd owns 211 establishments—or did own at the time when the Bishop wrote—with no less than 7000 nuns and at least 48,000 workwomen. The daily earnings of these establishments would come to the huge total of £2000; and the annual income resulting from the unpaid labour exacted from the *pensionnaires* would be at least £600,000. There was no attempt in the Nancy convent to separate girls of good character from those who had spent

evil lives; nor was there any regard paid to what might befall any girl dismissed summarily for inefficiency or disobedience. 'There are any number of girls ready to come to us,' said the Mother Superior.

It may be said that the Nancy case has no relation to this country. I should like to quote on this argument the opinion of that eminent authority, Sir Godfrey Lushington, G.C.M.G., formerly Under-Secretary for Home Affairs. Writing on this trial and its revelations in the *National Review*—the able editor of which, Mr. L. J. Maxse, had previously dissected with masterly power the details of the affair—Sir Godfrey Lushington discusses the question whether such disgraceful oppression could be practised in convents in England. He comes to the conclusion that it could be, for it is open to Orders to start establishments without let or hindrance anywhere in this country where they can obtain sites, and there carry on their work without any inspection such as is enforced legally on every factory.

When it was sought to extend the inspection of laundries to such institutions as the convents of the Good Shepherd, Mr. John Dillon protested in the House of Commons against the

idea. He said that 'the intrusion of the inspector . . . would be detrimental to the discipline of those institutions.' Quite so! Inspection of a factory where a tenth of the oppression practised in the convent at Nancy existed would soon be 'detrimental.' It would turn the lantern of the law upon dark deeds such as are perhaps at this moment being enacted in convents in England, Ireland, Wales, or Scotland. It would insist on proper conditions of living for the servants of the nuns who rule these establishments without pity or justice. 'The simple truth is that the House of the Good Shepherd was a factory,' wrote Sir Godfrey Lushington. 'In this factory the workers received no wages, and worked under discipline, not contract; were boarded and lodged within the walls, and were not permitted to go outside.'

This distinguished legal expert calls for similar inspection of convents as our British Government insists shall take place in the case of factories. He sums up the lessons of the case thus: 'And now for the English moral. In the abstract it seems to me a very simple one, viz. that religious or charitable institutions like convents, which carry on

business, require to be watched not less than ordinary manufacturing establishments, but more . . . Another moral is publicity. The absence of publicity must be regarded as a special danger. Had the walls of the "Good Shepherd" been built of transparent glass, the abuses could not have lasted more than a single day.'

Sir Godfrey Lushington replied to those who might fail to imagine a parallel between France and this country. 'But possibly there may be some who will ask: "How do these things concern us? They took place in France; they could never happen in England" . . . But I do believe that, whether in France or in England, like conditions tend to produce like results. And the conditions are alike. To begin with, at the present time in this country there are, according to the *Catholic Register*, nine houses of the 'Good Shepherd,' viz. East Finchley; Hammersmith; Ashford, in Middlesex; Arno's Vale, Bristol; Gosforth; Newcastle-on-Tyne; Ford, Liverpool; Cardiff; Blackley; Dalbeth House, Glasgow. It is not so stated, but I believe all of these are penitentiaries. Some are specified to be orphanages. Perhaps the two

operations are carried on together, as was the case at Nancy. But except so far as is stated in the *Register*, nothing is known to be public. . . . The house at Nancy, having been found out, has been suppressed by the French Government. Who knows that it may not come over here?" Considering the existence already of several houses belonging to this Order in England, such a transfer is quite within the bounds of probability. Sir Godfrey continued: 'In practice, religious houses are shrouded in secrecy. No one knows anything about them. The Home Office does not. Nor does the Local Government Board. Nor does Dublin Castle. Nor does Somerset House. The census gives no statistics showing the total number of religious houses and their locality, or the number of nuns, or the number of penitents, or the number of inmates.' Concluding his striking article, he wrote: 'The English moral of the case at Nancy, then, is that we should look at home, lest similar oppression of English women and children may be in our midst, or may arise unbeknown.'

I think I have paved the way for an examination of the extent to which foreign religious Orders have settled in Great Britain by this

summary of incidents which operated very strongly in France in bringing about the Associations Law. In the next chapter I shall deal with the exodus from France of those Orders which were expelled by the Government under the new Act.

CHAPTER III

SETTLING IN ENGLAND

ENGLAND has always been the asylum of the foreigner, when he or she is compelled by law or circumstances to quit a native land. So when the Associations Law came into force, it was chiefly to England that the steps of the expelled monks and nuns turned. Certain of the Orders which had incurred the displeasure of the French Government had already branches established in Great Britain, so that it was natural that they should wish to seek in our country a home. Much of the wealth of the Orders was invested in British stocks, and in this way alone was it taxed on behalf of the revenue of the land which had otherwise allowed the foreign Orders to escape the customary demands made upon citizens.

The expelled Orders knew very well that they could live in the country places of England

'without let or hindrance,' free from inspection or control, whereas they were not wanted by other nations in Europe, and, indeed, would not have been permitted to settle in some countries. Negotiations were started some time before the new Act came into force; land was obtained usually through intermediaries, so that the district where it was bought or leased only learned who were to be the new residents when building operations commenced. Sites for 'religious houses' were selected with great astuteness in neighbourhoods where as little notice as possible would be aroused by the arrival of foreign communities. Hospitality was accorded by various Roman Catholic institutions until the new homes were ready for occupation.

I asked for some facts on this question from one of the best-informed authorities in France, and this is the reply which reached me. Incidentally, it emphasises the need for insisting on detailed returns being made as to the exact numbers of members of these Orders who have settled in England. Perhaps some Member of Parliament will call for such a return.

'It is impossible to obtain statistics for

even an approximate estimate of the number of monks and nuns who have migrated to England. Commissioners of Police are not charged to oversee in any way this exodus, as the members of Orders are free to stay in France. When the real estate of these Orders has been liquidated, all such members will be entitled to claim what money they brought in when they took perpetual vows. Should there be a balance remaining, it will be distributed among them as if they were all shareholders in a joint stock company. When this has been accomplished, the Government will have nothing more to do with them unless they attempt to reassemble in religious communities. The personalty of these Orders has been transferred in many cases to Orders or Societies on the continent, and is intangible save to those who operated the transfer. No outsider can have any idea of the amount invested in other countries, but it is in all probability enormous, since land and buildings were appraised at forty million pounds—a very low estimate, I am told. It might be assumed that the exodus to England has been great, as well as to other countries under British rule. In all such countries the Orders will be free

from inspection or any national or religious control. The Commissioner of Police tells me that most of the monastic and conventual emigrants wear the clothes of Laics when they migrate, but he could not say even approximately the numbers which have so far left France.'

The religious Orders affected by refusals to authorise met together for consultation on March 23. Representatives of the Dominicans and Oratorians were absent, but otherwise there was a full meeting. It was decided to advocate what would be best described in a phrase which has become popular in another connection—'passive resistance' to the law. The Orders were to await the arrival of the gendarmes before submitting, and then they were to apply to the Civil Courts. About this time the Pope accorded an interview to General Charette, when financial proposals with regard to the settlement abroad of the dissolved Orders were discussed. As a large part of the revenue of the Vatican was derived from the Orders, especially from the work done in convents, it will be realised how important the question had become. The existence of the Concordat was threatened; the French Premier

stating that he did not believe the relations between the Church and the State would ever become cordial again. He had come to the conclusion that the best remedy for all these troubles would be disestablishment. M. Combes went on to say that he thought the next General Elections in three years' time would probably be fought on this issue.

In April, 1903, the priests and lay brothers connected with the only English Roman Catholic church in Paris had to leave that city by order of the Government. Father Michael Watts-Russell came with his band of priests to St. Joseph's Retreat, Highgate. In answer to questions, he said: 'General laws were made expelling all the religious orders, with the exception of five, which are of special service to the State in connection with Algeria and the colonies, or in other ways. We had hoped to be made an exception too, as being connected solely with the English and American Catholics in Paris. But the Government, albeit very civil, declined to make any exception to the rule, although we had appealed to the English and American Embassies to intervene in our favour.'

Father Watts-Russell was asked what

would become of the church in Paris, and he replied: 'Happily, it will not, like many of those served by the religious orders, have to be closed. M. Delcassé wrote an important letter, stating that the Government had no desire to close the church. Arrangements have, therefore, been made for it to be carried on by secular priests from this country.' This was the method which preceded the departure of the priests: 'The prefect of police merely called and read the decree giving us all notice to leave within fifteen days. We had nothing to bring away but our clothes. The church and the property connected with it are not the property of our community. They were registered as belonging to a civil society, or *société anonyme*, corresponding to a limited company here, the members of which are English and American members of the congregation. So that the church continues in their hands.'

A great effort was made to exert British influence on behalf of the English Benedictines, who were ordered to quit Douai by the middle of July, 1903. However, the French Government refused to reconsider its decision, and accordingly the Order decided to come to England. The bishop and chapter of the

Roman Catholic diocese of Portsmouth invited the brethren to undertake the management of St. Mary's College, Woolhampton, to the presidency of which the Right Rev. Abbot Larkin, O.S.B., was appointed. Thus one more branch of the Order took up its abode in the South of England, transplanting its members from France from the monastic college at Douai. It was rumoured about this time that the Benedictines intended starting a large school, similar to their colleges at Ampleforth in Yorkshire and Downside, Bath. The site which, it was said, they contemplated occupying was on the western slope of the Malvern Hills, with a view to gathering scholars from the Midland counties.

The Benedictines tried to make out a case for special consideration at the hands of the French Government. They pleaded that the English Benedictines only received English pupils, and these were prepared exclusively for British dioceses. They had erected within the last few years a guest-house and other buildings, which had cost them about £10,000. But their plea was unavailing. The decree permits the Order to enjoy the revenue of their property so long as they desire to remain in France.

With regard to the notorious monks of La Grande Chartreuse, M. Combes said that after the Law of 1901 the Order had abandoned all its establishments except La Grande Chartreuse. 'The members had gone abroad; let them stay there.' It was stated that the new home of the monks of this Order will be a fine castle and estate known as Cambion Casteau in southern Belgium. The price paid for this property is said to have been three million francs, a further proof of the great wealth of the Order.

For the benefit of those readers who are unaware of the settlements of religious orders and congregations in Great Britain prior to the extra settlements caused by the operation of the Associations Law, I will give a list, derived from official sources, with their chief superiors :—

Benedictines.—English Benedictine Congregation: Right Rev. F. Aidan Gasquet, O.S.B., D.D., Abbot President, and Abbots Smith, Larkin, and Ford. The Order has houses at Ampleforth and Downside.

Beuron Congregation: Abbot Hoeckelmann. Has a house at Erdington, on the outskirts of Birmingham.

Cassinese Congregation: Abbot Bergh. Has a house at Ramsgate. Abbot Natter, at Buckfastleigh.

Solesmes Congregation: Abbot Delatte. Has

a house at Appuldurcombe, in the Isle of Wight. Abbot Cabrol at Farnborough. Immediately subject to the Holy See: Abbot Linse. Has an establishment at Fort Augustus, N.B.

Canons Regular of the Lateran: Very Rev. Antony Allaria, C.R.L., DD., Visitor. Has a home, St. Monica's Priory, Spettisbury Blandford.

Carmelites: Very Rev. Dominic Ostendi, O.C.D., Vicar Provincial. Has a house at 47, Church Street, Kensington, W.

Carthusians: Very Rev. Paul Neyrand, Prior. Has a large establishment at Parkminster, Partridge Green, Sussex.

Cistercians (Reformed): Right Rev. Abbot Hipwood, O.C.R. Has a house, St. Mary's Abbey, Coalville, Leicester.

Dominicans: Very Rev. Lawrence Shapcote, O.P., Provincial. Has a house, St. Dominic's Priory, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Franciscan Capuchins: Very Rev. F. Anselm, O.S.F.C., Provincial. Has a house, St. Francis's, Crawley, Sussex.

Franciscans (Friars Minor): Very Rev. F. Osmund, O.F.M., Provincial. Has a house, St. Antony's, Forest Gate, E.

Institute of Charity: Very Rev. Dominic Gazzola, Inst. Ch., Provincial. Has a house, St. Mary's, Rugby.

Jesuits: Very Rev. Reginald Colley, S.J., Provincial. Has a house at 31, Farm Street, W.

Marist Fathers: Very Rev. James Moran, S.M., Provincial. Has a house, St Mary's, Dundalk.

Oblates of Mary Immaculate: Very Rev. Daniel

McIntyre, O.M.I., Provincial. Has a house at Stillorgan, Dublin.

Passionists: Very Rev. P. Coghlan, C.P., Provincial. Has a house, St. Joseph's Retreat, Highgate.

Praemonstratensians: Right Rev. Abbot Geudens, C.R.P. Has a house, Corpus Christi, Miles Platting, Manchester.

Redemptorists: Very Rev. John Bennett, C.SS.R., Provincial. Has a house, St. Mary's, Clapham, S.W.

Salesians: Very Rev. B. Macey, S.C., Provincial. Has a house in Surrey Lane, Battersea, S.W.

Servites: Very Rev. A. Coventry, O.S.M., Commissionary-Provincial. Has a house, St. Mary's Priory, 264, Fulham Road, S.W.

Readers will not fail to have noticed the foreign names which figure in this list. In the houses the proportion of foreigners is as great.

While we are dealing with these details, it may be convenient to add some relating to the schools for boys and girls which have grown in number so extraordinarily in recent years. According to the latest statistics which I can procure, there are 152 convent schools in England, apart from colleges and boys' schools, numbering about fifty. In addition, there are nineteen orphanages for girls, and five homes for working girls, and ten orphanages for boys. In order to gain some idea of the total inmates

I may mention that the convent belonging to the now notorious Order of the Good Shepherd at Blackley, has 200 girls, described as 'poor penitents.' The convent belonging to the same Order at East Finchley has 190 girls; that at Ford has 230; at Gosforth, 150 girls; and at Hammersmith, 230 girls. In view of what has been revealed at the Order of the Good Shepherd Convent at Nancy, is it any wonder that Sir Godfrey Lushington should make the claim for the same inspection of convents as of factories? The Convent and Orphanage of Our Lady and St. Joseph at Southam, is under the care of the Sisters of the Poor Child Jesus, a community which was expelled in 1876 from Germany. I notice that it advertises its power to fulfil 'orders for church work.'

The name of the Redemptorists occurs in my List of Orders. Their Confraternity in Limerick is one of the most successful. Once a week about seven thousand men and boys meet in relays for instruction in the Redemptorist chapel. Their attendance is marked, and they are divided into class meetings. In 1901, great processions of men paraded the streets of the city, visiting different chapels in order to

gain the special indulgence granted in connection with the Pope's jubilee. On one Sunday, no fewer than seven thousand men and lads walked in procession, accompanied by bands, and carrying banners of the saints and large pictures of the Crucifixion. Priests and prefects led the repetition of the rosary at intervals, and the whole scene recalled some Continental city rather than a town in Ireland.

CHAPTER IV

A VISIT TO THE CARTHUSIAN MONASTERY IN SUSSEX

IT is not easy to obtain particulars as to the daily life in a monastery on British soil, so that many readers will doubtless be interested in the following account of a visit to the Carthusian monastery in Sussex.

The Carthusians have now been settled in Sussex for twenty years. It was the first house of this monastic Order which had been founded in England since 1538. The Order had its origin in 1084, and took its name 'Chartreuse' from the mountain range in France where it commenced its existence. At Parkminster, in Sussex, the Order has a fine set of buildings, including the church of St. Hugh. A visitor to this English monastery writes as follows of his experiences: 'A lay brother in the creamy coloured habit of the Order greets us with a smile, and in a few

moments we cross the quadrangle and are handed over to another brother, who kindly acts as a most willing cicerone. First, we enter the church, and are at once struck by its beauty of proportion and workmanship. A long high nave, separated by a good screen dividing fathers from lay brethren, forms the church. . . . When we entered, vespers were being sung, and the effect of the low, sustained harmony of the singing, the figures of the monks habited and cowled, with the pointed hood for the head, the postulants in a brown habit relieving the lines of creamy colour, and the ascending smoke of the incense, made us feel that we were back in the Middle Ages.'

The writer proceeds to describe the fine library, the cemetery, the chapter house, and the chapel of the lay brethren. He gives this account of the daily routine in the monastery: 'Carthusians live in solitude. Each monk leaves his little house but seldom, and the monastery but once a week, when he is permitted his three hours' walk. He meals, works, and studies in solitude, and for the cleanliness and purity of his tiny house is personally responsible. Between five and six in the morning the monk rises from his bed,

and until ten his time is devoted to spiritual exercises, comprising mass in the church, meditation, and study. From ten until half-past two, save what is required for his frugal meal, he employs his time in manual labour in his workshop and garden, and in intellectual labour in his study. Vespers are sung at 2.45, and then, until half-past six or seven, he is employed in spiritual exercises, and in study in the solitude of his cell. He then retires to rest, but at eleven he is awakened by a brother called the "excitator." The great bell of the church is ringing, and with his lantern to guide his footsteps through the sombre cloisters, he hurries to the church for the great midnight service. This service lasts some three hours, and is conducted by the dim light of the lanterns carried by each monk. It is about two in the morning when he retires to his cell, and he then retires to rest again till the early morning. On Sundays and feast-days the monks dine in common in the refectory, when conversation is permitted; at other times silence is enjoined. There are no servants, all cooking, laundry work and baking being done by the lay brothers, and each father is his own housekeeper in his interesting house.'

I have given this description at considerable length, because it presents a glimpse written by a sympathetic pen of such a monastery as belongs to the Carthusians. What a picture of the burial of a living man it is! An argument has often been adduced that such a life is not wasted, for it provided the leisure necessary for the production of great work in literature. But how slight has been the enrichment, in modern times at least, of our literature on the part of these monks spending a life of contemplation and silence. Contrast their life with that of St. Paul, 'in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.' Visiting Parkminster 'made us feel that we were back in the Middle Ages,' says the writer. Would to God that the life of the monks were more consonant with the example of the disciples of Christ, who did not immure themselves within high walls and impose upon one another a silence, but who went about, as their Master

went about, doing good and living the life of faith and prayer amid the temptations and trials of a wicked world.

The account of life at Parkminster, or of life at other monasteries, may strike the superficial observer as picturesque and harmless; but there is another side to the shield, known to all students of the monastic system. Peace and holiness might be expected to flourish in the midst of such retirement from the world. But cloistered retreat does not purchase immunity from the sins and weaknesses of human life; and the very seclusion adds a temptation to tyranny and an inducement to mental disease.

Nor are these monastic institutions free from the charge of fostering political machinations, or they would not have made themselves so obnoxious to other countries. The Jesuit ideal never changes, and it aims at the conquest of Protestantism and the subjugation of the world under the toils of a spiritual and moral bondage. That is why the serious attention of our countrymen should be turned to the settlement of these foreign Religious Orders in Britain.

CHAPTER V

FOREIGN ROMAN CATHOLICS IN ENGLAND

HAVING detailed the circumstances which necessitated the departure of many of the Orders from France, I propose to deal with their settlement in this country.

The latest figures I can obtain with regard to the Jesuits may properly be given here, as it has been with the Jesuits that trouble has always commenced. The Jesuits have in this country seven schools, twenty-nine mission residences, and two staff establishments in London. The English-speaking 'assistancy' of the Society of Jesus in 1901 was said to be 2628 members out of a total membership of 15,145. Of the 2628 Jesuits who spoke English, it was calculated that 1259 were stationed in the British Empire.

As to the total of foreign Roman Catholics

in this country at present, it is impossible to give an approximate figure, beyond stating that now there are at least fifty-eight congregations of foreign Catholics represented amongst us. Each of these congregations has, of course, its own circle of adherents. As to the increase in Roman Catholic religious establishments in England (I omit Scotland and Ireland), it is striking when stated in this form: In 1870 there were 299 Catholic establishments; in March, 1903, there were 990!

Where have the foreign religious Orders settled? Before they can decide on any permanent home they have to secure the consent, I believe, of the Roman Catholic bishop of the diocese where they propose residing. The financial aspect of the question does not appear to be difficult to solve, for there are many wealthy sympathisers who are prepared to help. For instance, the Benedictine monks from Finisterre were invited to make Pembrey House, Carmarthenshire, their resting-place until a suitable home could be found for them elsewhere. This was owing to the kindness of the Earl of Ashburnham, a well-known Roman Catholic peer. The monks are now renting Glyn Abbey, near Kidwelly. Their Superior

is Abbot Dom Joseph Bouchard. I hear that they lost a considerable amount of their property by the foundering of the steamer 'St. Joseph' in the Channel soon after their arrival in Wales.

The English Benedictines have purchased 'Leasowe Castle' Hotel, overlooking the Mersey Channel on the Cheshire side, and here they have established themselves. I mentioned in a previous chapter the intention of the Benedictines to take the place of the secular clergy at St. Mary's College, Woolhampton, Berkshire. Dr. Mostyn, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Menevia, has asked some of the Breton monks to engage in mission work in the neighbourhood of Pwllheli—a significant proof, if it were needed, that our new visitors are not going to remain within the walls of their monasteries, but are to prosecute an active campaign in various directions. The Marist Brothers have purchased a mansion and four houses at Grove Ferry, not far from Canterbury.

A company of Cistercians have gone to Kingsbridge, a quiet district near Plymouth, and have attracted little attention, so far. It was about the month of May, 1903, that a little band of monks arrived from France in the

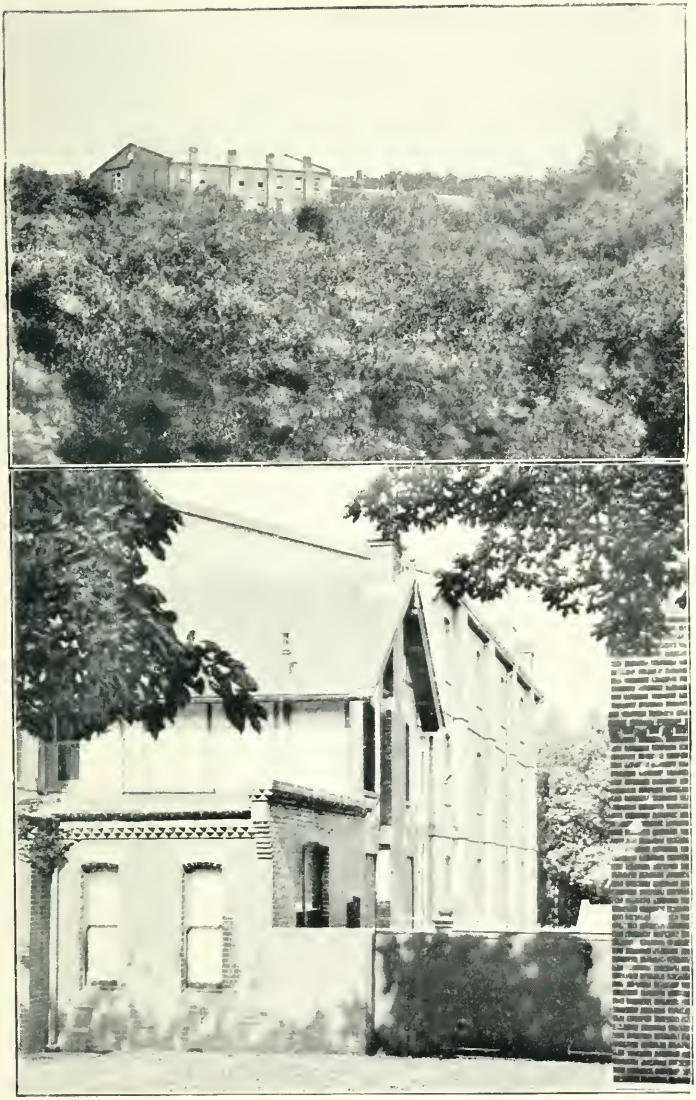
'Cattewater,' Plymouth. They brought with them horses and various agricultural implements, which they unshipped and took by road to Kingsbridge. They have bought land in the district and have been busily engaged in farming. These monks do not appear to speak English, and this led to an incident which was reported in the newspapers. One of the lay brethren lost his way on the road, and being unable to make himself understood, he wandered about all night, until he was discovered by the police at Ivybridge in a distressed condition. He was taken to the vicarage, and when another lay brother who knew the road had arrived, he was sent in his company to Kingsbridge. As these men do not yet speak English, they will not be able to conduct religious work among the country folk, by whom they are regarded with curiosity. The Dominicans have already arrived in considerable numbers, and a settlement of them is at Haverstock Hill.

So far, I have been writing of male members of foreign Orders, but female members have come over in even greater numbers. Near Hastings, for instance, a Convent of the Society of Marie Reparatrice has

been started, and I give from the official description of the Society the ideas governing it :—

'Reparation is exercised by works of zeal of various kinds. With this object in view, general retreats are constantly held in the houses of the Society, for persons of every class, for young girls who are preparing for First Communion, and for the children of the poor. Catechism is given to children and to adults, either to prepare them for First Communion, or to enable them to persevere and to continue their religious instruction. There are libraries also provided to supply good books and to ward off dangerous reading. Confraternities and patronages are established in the various houses of the Society in order to foster devotion and to afford means of increasing in virtue. Moreover, the houses of the Society are accessible throughout the year to persons desirous of making special retreats, or who may wish to be instructed in the Faith prior to their being received into the Church, or for any other motive.'

These sentences, which have a certain candour to recommend them, describe the methods of propaganda which are adopted in such convents. Note especially the provision of 'good books,' that is to say, books which will place the tenets of the Roman Catholic faith in their most alluring guise before the minds of young



DISTANT AND NEAR VIEWS OF THE JESUIT SETTLEMENT AT HASTINGS.

persons. The last phrase, too, reveals the system under which the Roman Catholic Church has recruited many new adherents. A member of that Church will urge some one who is unsettled in his or her faith to go for 'instruction,' saying that it will not bind the person to accept any doctrines which are not made perfectly clear. Thus, 'prior to being received into the Church,' many a convert has been led over the line.

The new home of these nuns is Hastings Lodge, Old London Road, Hastings. The Mother Superior in charge of the convent used to be at Chiswick. Another convent of this Order has lately been started at Newcastle-on-Tyne. The women belonging to this Society are 'enclosed nuns,' that is to say, they never leave their retreat for the outside world. The Society was founded on December 8, 1854, and has houses in different European countries. It has even penetrated as far as Jerusalem, where, to quote official statement, 'the Blessed Sacrament is exposed during the whole day and night by a special decree of his Holiness.' The habit is white and blue. Several French nuns have recently come to this convent in Hastings as a result of the laws in France.

The Isle of Wight has for several years been a favourite resort for foreign Roman Catholics, but during the last few months the island has received scores of monks and nuns from France in addition to its ordinary residentiary community. In August, 1903, it was stated that Carisbrooke House, which is situated a few minutes' walk from Carisbrooke Castle, had been acquired by a body of French nuns, who would soon take up their home in this mansion. At Northwood House, Cowes, there are over a hundred nuns, and at Clarence House, near to the once Royal residence at Osborne, about the same number of nuns belonging to another Order have come to live.

At Whitwell, on the outskirts of Ventnor, nearly one hundred monks have settled during the past year, and they are mostly from France. They do their best to foil any inquisitiveness as to their work, and, being foreigners, little intercourse between them and the islanders is possible.

In the neighbourhood of the metropolis there have been several settlements in addition to those I have already mentioned. About eighty Dominican monks came to Edmonton

in the summer; a band of French 'Fathers of the Soudan' are soon to settle at Sidcup. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Southwark is apparently delighted at the incursion of foreigners, for he has invited them wholesale to undertake mission work in his diocese. Already there are many expelled monks and nuns busily employed in making themselves acquainted with the altered conditions of their life in London. The bordering counties of Surrey, Sussex, Middlesex and Kent, are receiving a large amount of attention from these new-comers. Settlements are either started or in prospect at Chertsey, Seaford, Brighton, and Farnborough. The sympathy of the ex-Empress Eugénie at Farnborough is, of course, a valuable aid to the colony there.

The fair county of Devon has proved very attractive to these *émigrés*. I have related the arrival of Trappists at Kingsbridge. There are several other places in Devonshire where monks and nuns were quietly settling down. They make their plans in the most shrewd and subtle manner, and usually the locality knows nothing of their new neighbours until a sudden incursion of foreigners in the striking garb of

their Orders arouses the astonishment of the rustic population. The manor house at Irgsdon on the borders of Dartmoor, for instance, was not long ago obtained for the occupation of nearly one hundred nuns of the Order of the Holy Spirit. In a village called Martin, near Fordingbridge, Wilts, eighty Trappist monks are expected to make their home; and as several hundred acres of land have been purchased for them it looks as if this number will soon be augmented. At Ilfracombe, Newton Abbot, Bodmin, Penzance, Teignmouth, Abbotskerswell, Hayle, and other parts of the West of England, the expelled Orders are finding an unobtrusive resting-place. At Swanage a very large company of monks has arrived, and as they aim at gathering a congregation it is expected that a church will soon be built for them.

CHAPTER VI

METHODS OF SETTLEMENT AND THE AIMS OF THE ORDERS

THE mode of procedure in the case of fresh settlements was usually as follows. One or two pioneers came to survey the land, and decided as to the best situation. They gained all possible information as to the surrounding neighbourhood and the likelihood of sympathy. If there is already a community of Roman Catholics, of course this preliminary work is easier. Then, having settled on the house where the foreign monks or nuns can be brought, they opened negotiations—sometimes in a roundabout way, so as to avoid publicity — and obtained either a downright purchase of a house and estate, or a long lease of the same. Furniture would be sent down, and very quickly any alterations which were necessary were made in the adaptation of the place to the needs of its new occupants. The

Order was advised of the readiness of the home, and a band of advance members came to take possession. The monks and nuns have in many cases crossed the Channel in boats instead of coming by the regular steamers. The rest of their journey is performed with as little publicity as possible. When all is in working order, the improvised chapel for daily services is open on stated occasions for the public to visit it; that is, when it is a chapel attached to a monastery. In rural districts I have found that the villagers do not show much interest in their new neighbours, though a few will go to see 'how they furriners behave themselves at church.' They return from Mass more puzzled than edified. The policy of the foreign monks has been to ingratiate themselves slowly with the residents of the district. Where it is possible for them to aid local progress without traversing their religious opinions, they do so. In one place the Fathers sunk a well for the benefit of the village, and in this way gained the favour of many who had looked askance at their first arrival. Protestants are conciliated on every occasion when the monks come in contact with them. Some of the high officials are men of great charm and

culture, and they lose no chance of wielding their fascination.

About thirty-five Jesuits have had a monastery at Hollington, Hastings, for several years. A representative of the *Hastings Mail* had an interview with some of the priests last year, and I quote some of their statements, as they disclose the views of Jesuit residents in England with considerable clearness. Asked if they officiated in Roman Catholic services in the neighbourhood, they replied: 'I am sorry to say, No. Ours, of necessity, must indeed be a prudent life. Popular prejudice is so much against our sect that our movements in doing good are very much hampered; still, we do what we can, and have in the grounds a small chapel of our own, where we have several services each Sunday, starting from five in the morning and continuing, at intervals, till seven in the evening. Quite a number of Church of England people visit us each week, while many attend our services, and we men, who have spent our lives in the study of religion, see that the breach between the different Churches is not nearly so wide as it was in former days.'

At the conclusion of the interview these

words were uttered: 'In a quiet way we do what little good we are able to, and I think the people in the neighbourhood respect our sect, for wherever we go we are most kindly received. This pleases us, for it shows that in the future our movements may be less hampered, and we shall be allowed to do our work with greater ease.'

So long as the Jesuits retain their ideals and rules, it is not surprising that they incur 'popular prejudice.' It is instructive to note that this popular prejudice has been strongest in the countries where Jesuits are best known. There must be a good reason for the dislike of the people—most of whom are Roman Catholics in the countries I refer to—to these Jesuits, or they would not be regarded with so much hatred. If Roman Catholics look on Jesuits with suspicion, how much greater reason is there for a Protestant country to keep an eye on their proceedings.

Many people are inclined to say when allusion is made to the settlement in Britain of large numbers of foreign Orders, 'Well, what harm can they do to us? We belong to a Protestant nation; our Sovereign has to take an oath of allegiance to Protestantism; our

institutions are Protestant. Why should we grudge these foreigners a refuge from the oppression of Governments?' I admit that such remarks seem to be plausible in their easy tolerance, and breathe a charity which thinketh no evil. But, in reply, let me say that these foreign Orders do not come to Britain in order to slumber—they come to work. The objects which they had in view in France, for instance, have not altered because they have crossed the little strip of sea between us and our French neighbours. The great motto of the Church of Rome prevents her followers from ever yielding a single jot of their purpose.

If you ask for proof of this programme to which these Orders have given their hearty assent, I will quote a few sentences from Cardinal Manning's sermon on 'The Perpetual Office of the Council of Trent.' The Cardinal was preaching to the Third Provincial Council of Westminster, and this is what he said:

'And lastly, it is good to be here in England. It is yours, Right Reverend Fathers, to subjugate and subdue, to bend and to break, the will of an Imperial race, the will which, as the will of Rome of old, rules over nations invincible and inflexible. You have a great commission to fulfil, and great is the

prize for which you strive. . . . It is the head of Protestantism, the centre of its movements, and the stronghold of its power. Weakened in England, it is paralysed everywhere; conquered in England, it is conquered throughout the world: once overthrown here, all is a war of detail. . . . It is the key of the whole position of modern error. England once restored to faith becomes the evangelist of the world.'

Could any words be more definite in outlining the campaign which the Church of Rome is waging against the Protestantism of Britain? These are the words of an Englishman, of one who knew what he was speaking about; and he placed before his hearers this day-dream of conquest. When you analyse its ideas, you cannot avoid being struck by the masterly nature of such a programme. In the words 'subjugate, subdue, bend, break,' rings the note of the Spanish Inquisition. Behind those verbs lie the wholesale torture that counts everything for righteousness which can win a proselyte. When the visitor to a museum gazes with horror at some frightful relic of the middles ages, with ingenious cruelty to produce the most terrible agony in every nerve of the body, he is inclined to say to himself: 'But all that is impossible to-day—it has been buried

by the advance of civilisation and public opinion.' But just as some implement of crime may be dropped into the ocean and carried for thousands of miles, only to be washed up on some distant shore and reveal its guilt, so the evil deeds of a past age have a way of reviving after centuries. 'Subjugate,'—the derivation of the word every Latin scholar knows; 'Subdue,' as one nation causes another to yield its liberty at the point of the sword; 'Bend,' with the ardent heat of a furnace; 'Break,' with the remorseless hand that destroys in a moment the exquisite vase. Is there any hint of peaceful worship, quiet deeds of charity, patient waiting until the refugees are permitted to return to their native lands, in these strenuous words? No, it is a trumpet-call to war, war to the knife against the liberties and faith of British subjects. It is a note of absolute indifference to the Constitution, and that has been the chief cause of all the expulsion of foreign Orders from other countries.

Let me reiterate that they have been driven from countries professing the Roman Catholic faith — and why? Because they have been working openly and surreptitiously against the State. They care absolutely nothing for the

powers of monarchs—their purpose is to bring all monarchs under the supreme control of the Pope. Apart altogether from a religious standpoint, how can we stand quietly indifferent while efforts are being put forth to 'break the will of an Imperial race'? As citizens of no mean empire, we must resist to the death any return of Rome's power to interfere with us, and regard with the utmost suspicion all the subterranean attempts which are in process to change the avowed Protestantism of our Constitution.

Some of us have not forgotten the action of a Lord Mayor of London who gave the toast of the Pope before that of the Sovereign at a banquet at the Mansion House. It was an outward and visible sign of the relative order in which a Roman Catholic considered the two personalities. Nor have we forgotten the instructions issued by the late Cardinal Vaughan at the time of Queen Victoria's death, relating to the special memorial services which loyal citizens desired to hold. If these things were done by Englishmen, what can we reasonably expect from foreign Roman Catholics who are not affected by citizenship? We must be prepared for exactly the same steady,

relentless opposition to the Protestant Constitution of this country, and for the exercise of the same methods which have gained for them the hatred of even Catholic Governments.

Rome is in no hurry, but she never pauses. She has seen her power dwindle in the older countries of Europe, but she has concurrently seen her faith develop itself in the younger countries of the world. In America and Australia she has been labouring with astuteness and success, modifying some of her methods to suit the requirements of a democratic population. In Great Britain she will materially increase her machinery by the arrival of so many expelled monks and nuns, and while Roman Catholicism may be diminishing somewhat in France—where thousands have left the Church during the last five years—it will increase in England unless the Protestants of the land awake to the danger.

CHAPTER VII

SETTLEMENTS IN THE CHANNEL ISLES AND ELSEWHERE

IN detailing other places where the foreign Orders have settled recently, I have not hitherto mentioned the Channel Islands. Their peculiar history and constitution have made them an ideal place of refuge, and in the Islands many foreigners have always resided. Some facts as to the Jesuits may be of interest. I understand that, in making their arrangements for living here, they have always had to employ round-about methods, but that is usually the case with their purchase or lease of land or houses under British control. I am informed that there are in the Islands at least fifteen hundred members of foreign religious Orders, and they are receiving additions from France frequently. As in other instances which have come under my notice, some of the Jesuits are profoundly interested in science. One of

the Fathers in Jersey has been responsible for the Eiffel Tower, which is a landmark in the district. It was erected for testing the speed of the wind, and is connected by electricity with the observatory on the left of the tower. Many of the Jesuit Fathers are thoroughly up-to-date in their knowledge of the latest discoveries in natural science, and they read assiduously various publications in foreign languages which relate to science. Apparently, their study has not yet modified their religious beliefs, although one would expect it would shatter many extraordinary ideas which run counter to scientific facts.

The chief home of the Jesuits in Jersey is called 'St. Louis,' and is in St. Saviour's Road, St. Heliers. It was formerly the Imperial Hotel. At present there are about ninety persons resident in this building, which has been in their hands for over thirty years. The majority of the men are French, but the whole community is cosmopolitan, and includes Spaniards, Danes, Irishmen, etc. After studying philosophy and theology here they scatter all over the world. Jersey is simply a training-ground. There is a fine library with many rare and costly volumes. In close proximity

to 'St. Louis' is a substantial and excellently arranged building. Here the arts and literature are chiefly studied. The men begin here their novitiate. Years ago there were several Jesuits who studied naval engineering here, and afterwards joined the French Navy. But the Government made a rule not to allow any lad who had been trained outside France to join the Navy, and so the young fellows had to quit the college in Jersey and learn their profession on French soil. I do not think the fact that they were Jesuits had anything to do with the Government's decision. The building has, at the present time, about a hundred residents. It was built by the Jesuits to suit their requirements, and is admirably adapted for the purposes of a training college.

The methods employed by some of these foreign Orders are not likely to recommend them to the British working man. In one case, of which I have particulars, the monks calmly told the workmen that they would only pay them two-thirds of their wages, and they must reckon the rest of the money went to help them 'win heaven.' If they were not content with these terms they could sue them. Before the arrival of the first pay-day, on which these

statements were made to the men, the monks were continually talking to the men and telling them what good deeds they were doing on behalf of the kingdom of heaven.

But this method of obtaining 'salvation by works' did not meet with the approval of the workmen when they were informed that they were only going to receive two-thirds of their wages. The foreman of the men was a member of the Plymouth Brethren, and he replied that, personally, he could not go to law, as he believed in the word: 'And if any man would go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also' (Matt. v. 40). So this good man gave the monks a receipt for the full amount, and they must have chuckled at the success of their scheme. The other workmen were not so ready to relinquish their rightful wages, and are not to be blamed for exacting the lawful payment for their labour.

Besides the buildings described as occupied by Jesuits in Jersey, there is a large Crêche, adapted for the care of little children. That institution is not under the same authority as the Jesuit settlement, but is Catholic. It is a spacious building, and is well planned for

its purpose. In other parts of the Channel Islands there are foreign Catholics, and they have, as in the case of Jersey, received additions since the passing of the Associations Act. Islands always attract such religious communities, owing to their isolation from the rest of the population. This is doubtless the reason why they have flocked in such numbers to the Isle of Wight. In islands there is usually a chance of arriving and departing without the same amount of observation as would be the case in a town in England, where the peculiar garb of these religious communities attracts immediate attention.

At Old Charlton a settlement has been lately founded, and three mansions standing in grounds overlooking the Thames valley, and bounded on the west by Greenwich Park, have been acquired. The Marist Brothers have purchased a mansion and four houses at Grove Ferry, not far from Canterbury, and are settling there in considerable numbers. The Jesuit Fathers have decided to build a church at South Wimbledon as soon as possible, and extension work is going on in other London suburbs. A Roman Catholic magazine, *The Shield*, says—

'Several communities of women are taking a share in the great progress that is going on. Expelled from France, they have found refuge in England, where they will carry on their work for many generations to come in perfect freedom and safety. The following are some of the places where they have made a foundation, opening their chapels, which in most cases consist of the largest and most convenient room in their house, to the public, thus giving facilities for Mass and the Sacraments which could not otherwise be possible: Charlton, S.E.; Rottingdean, near Brighton; Seaford (where a community of Sisters have, at their pressing request, been allowed to purchase the house which belonged to the bishop personally, having been bought for him by his mother shortly before her death, and have undertaken to keep the chapel open to the public, and to provide the faithful of the locality with the same spiritual facilities that they have enjoyed for more than three years past. The chapel will be served by Assumptionist Fathers from Newhaven, of which missionary district Seaford will continue to form part); Kearsney, near Dover (where the Augustinian Sisters have found a refuge, and, if they have not done so already, will very soon open their chapel to the public).'

On the above quotation I will make only two or three comments. The reader will note that the Communities have 'come to stay';

they mean to carry on their work 'for many generations to come.' This is no transitory visit which they are paying to England, and therefore it is all the more important that at the beginning of their sojourn they should be brought under precisely the same legal conditions as affect Protestant Institutions. We meet with a familiar name in the Assumptionist Fathers who are going to serve the chapel at Seaford. They belong to the same order which *The Times* described in these words: 'In the pursuit of their secular ends they acknowledge no restraints of patriotism, of morality, or of religion.'

Taking the latest figures for the diocese of Southwark, I find there has been steady increase of chapels and priests. In 1897 there were 305 regular and secular priests; in 1903 there were 64 more. The public churches, chapels, and stations have advanced in the same six years from 143 to 170. The chapels of communities have increased from 71 to 110; and even then no mention is made of the large number of foreign refugees, or of the fact that seventeen new sites for chapels have been secured. These figures only relate to the diocese of Southwark, but they are sufficiently

remarkable as a record of six years' progress. When all the foreign Orders have settled down, there will be a very substantial addition to these statistics.

CHAPTER VIII

CONVENTS AND THEIR TACTICS

IN several English towns the sisters of expelled communities are starting private schools, and are soliciting parents to send their girls to them. The terms are sufficiently low to be tempting to people of small means, and there is a vague notion that Catholic nuns can always teach 'such beautiful needlework, you know.' The nuns use the sentimental idea of having been sent adrift in the world by the cruel French Government, and already I have heard of these schools receiving a large number of pupils. Lately, a band of Augustinian Sisters have started work as teachers at Hull. Other new settlements of nuns, in addition to those already mentioned, are at Kelvedon, Tottenham, Guildford, Cricklewood, Hitchin, and in Brompton Square. How can Protestant parents imagine that the Sisters will be content with secular instruction and with

educating their pupils in music and needlework, when their religious instinct insists on their using every possible means to proselytise? Is it surprising that girls who have been educated at their most susceptible age by the nuns ultimately are won over to Roman Catholicism? It would be amazing if, with all the winning methods of the Sisters, it were otherwise.

I have followed up very closely the results which have attended the sending of English girls to French convents for education, and I can hardly point to one instance where the girls have returned in sympathy with Protestant views. If they have not gone over to the Church of Rome, they have become so ritualistic as to be barely distinguishable from Roman Catholics, and probably land, eventually, in the Roman Catholic communion.

I will give one case which came under my personal notice. Two sisters were sent by their Protestant parents to a French convent, where the Sisters promised no influence should be brought to bear on them in the direction of Roman Catholicism. When the time came for them to go home for their holidays in England, an excuse was made that they did not seem to

want to go. After they had been a year at the convent, the parents insisted on the girls returning home, and sent a young governess to fetch them away. On her arrival at the convent she found that both the girls had been received into the Church of Rome, and great pressure was brought to bear upon the governess to join the Church and remain at the convent herself. She had the strength of mind to resist all the blandishments of the Sisters, and ultimately she succeeded in persuading the girls (who were completely under the power of the nuns) to do their parents' bidding and return to England.

It is not as if the education given in these Catholic schools were even efficient. The position of Roman Catholic schools in this country is often far behind the ordinary Board School, when it comes to test. As regards the private schools, there is such an absence of enlightened teaching that the pupils are sent forth into the world with far less ability to meet the growing requirements of the age than if they had been taught at an ordinary school for the children of the people. Yet parents seem blind to these facts, and entrust their daughters to the powerful influence of nuns who never relax their hold on their pupils until

they have caused them to surrender the Protestant faith of their fathers.

I write strongly on this point, because the fate of children decides the fate of the nation. They are the trustees of posterity, and if they are enslaved by the bonds which their forefathers have been striking off during past generations, it will be largely the result of early education. If these foreign Sisters desire pupils, let them seek them among their co-religionists, and not trespass in Protestant homes. It is lamentable how ignorant many people are of the result which nearly always attends the sending of children to Roman Catholic schools, especially such as are conducted on the Continent in convents where, removed from parental authority and the evironment of Protestantism, the girls are inoculated very speedily with Catholic doctrine.

Here is an indictment of the Church of Rome which puts the points needing to be emphasised to-day. It occurs in a letter from Mr. Gladstone (assuredly not a biassed observer) to the Duchess of Sutherland, and is printed in Mr. John Morley's masterly *Life of Mr. Gladstone.*

'The proselytising agency of the Roman Church in this country I take to be one of the worst of the

religious influences of the age. I do not mean as to its motives, for these I do not presume to touch, nor feel in any way called upon to question. But I speak of its effects, and they are most deplorable. The social misery that has been caused, not for truth, but for loss of truth, is grievous enough, but it is not all; for to those who are called converts, and to those who have made them, we owe a very large proportion of the mischiefs and scandals within our own communion, that have destroyed the faith of many, and that are, I fear, undermining the very principle of faith in thousands and tens of thousands who as yet suspect neither the process nor the cause. With this pernicious agency I for my own part wish to have nothing whatever to do; although I am one who thinks lightly, in comparison with most men, of the *absolute* differences in our belief from the formal documents of the Church of Rome, and who wishes for that Church, on her own ground, as for our own, all health that she can desire, all reformation that can be good for her.'

The proselytising agency to which Mr. Gladstone alluded is largely in the hands of female Religious Orders. Nuns strive to 'win heaven' by gaining converts, and by sending children to the convents and to schools conducted by nuns parents are aiding the proselytising which afterwards they condemn. No methods could be more astute than those

which the Sisters of these Orders pursue. They display great affection towards their pupils, and having gained their hearts, they soon persuade them to renounce the faith of their fathers. If Protestant parents allow their children to attend Roman Catholic Schools, they do so at the peril of their faith, for every effort will be made to proselytise, despite all fair promises to the contrary.

The way in which many of the Orders have obtained their great wealth is most disgraceful, and this applies especially to some of the Orders for females. Acting under the artful scheming of men, the Sisters have frequently obtained large estates by the shadiest of methods. It has been stated on good authority, that, within the last fifteen years, £40,000,000 of real estate has been obtained by the religious Orders in France, much of it by means which were far from honourable—to put it mildly. Much of this wealth has been manœuvred into the power of the Orders by nuns.

Among living Frenchmen, few men are held in such high respect as M. Henri Brisson. He is nearly seventy years old, and his career has been full of distinction. He has been more than once elected President of the Chamber of

Deputies, and more than once Prime Minister of France. His ability and judicial fairness caused him to be chosen as President of the Panama Inquiry Committee. This French statesman is therefore no biassed mediocrity, but a man well qualified to speak or write of French affairs.

M. Brisson has written a book dealing with the grasping methods by which religious Orders have obtained huge wealth. In this volume, *La Congrégation*, there are stories told with care and detail which would amaze any student of religion. It would seem as though these Orders had forgotten the most elementary ideas of justice and truth, and had allowed nothing to stand in the way of acquiring what they have termed 'God's money.' With extraordinary cleverness they lay plans for gaining real estate, sometimes by terrorising wealthy people on their death-beds, sometimes by persuading heirs or heiresses to hand over the title-deeds to great estates. The Law Courts in France have again and again during the last twenty years been occupied in trying cases in which monasteries and nunneries have benefited hugely by underhand tricks, and in not a few cases, I am glad to record, the guilty

parties have been compelled to make restitution.

I will give one sample, a recent one, of the way in which an Order goes to work. On September 22, 1903—only a short time ago, you will notice—a convent of the Order of Saint Clara was evicted near Nîmes, not under the Associations Law, but in accordance with the decision of the civil and criminal courts. The crime with which these women were charged was as follows: An old lady of great wealth, Mademoiselle de la Nouvelle, lived in the village of Foussignargues in a handsome manor-house. A priest persuaded this unmarried lady to leave her fortune to the Church, and, lest she should change her mind, he started a convent in her lifetime in the manor-house itself. The fury of the old lady's relatives may be better imagined than described.

Although Mademoiselle de la Nouvelle was already over eighty years old, she was persuaded to join this Order of Clarisses, and duly took a vow of perpetual chastity. When she died in May, 1900, her relatives wrote at once to the Mother Superior, installed with her nuns in the home of the old lady, asking how Mademoiselle de la Nouvelle had disposed of her property.

No answer was received. After further correspondence, a notary-public produced a will purporting to be that of the deceased lady. In this will she had left her house to two nuns on condition that a Mass was said for her soul every fortnight; and the rest of her estate to her cousin, Col. de la Nouvelle, under the following conditions: He had to give the Sisters of the Order every year, 100 pounds of cheese, 200 gallons of wine, 22 pounds of wax candles (presumably for Masses), 110 pounds of oil for the lamp in the chapel, 220 pounds of apples, 110 pounds of chestnuts, 5 tons of coal, 50 pounds of flour, and every day a gallon of milk and 25 pounds of bread. The unfortunate Colonel saw that, after complying with such conditions, there would be no remaining benefit to himself from the estate, so he decided not to apply for probate. Let me say that the drafting of a will in these terms has been constantly exposed in the French Courts: it is an old trick for defrauding the rightful heirs.

But the artful nuns had overreached themselves in their greed. In the will there was a clause by which it was stated the executor would be 'compelled to see to it that after

the death of the two afore-mentioned nuns, the estate should be handed over to two nuns of of the same Order.' Now the law of entail was abolished in France over a century ago, its abuse in connection with monastic institutions having been proved on many occasions. So, when the relatives took the case of the will into Court, they laid stress on this illegality. Three years of expensive and heart-breaking litigation followed, but last summer the Court of Appeal at Nîmes decided that the will was null and void. The Sisters, ensconced in the manor-house of the late Mademoiselle de la Nouvelle, never budged from their position, probably feeling that possession was nine-tenths of the law.

The relatives insisted on pursuing the matter, and demanded a statement as to what had been done with the personalty of Mademoiselle de la Nouvelle. The Sisters signed affidavits that the old lady did not leave a penny, and the notary swore the same. But inquiries in Paris discovered the fact that one of the nuns had been drawing, every quarter, coupons of 63,000 francs of Rentes registered in Mademoiselle de la Nouvelle's name. The fraud was out, and, rightly, the relatives were

relentless in unearthing the whole crime. The nun was called upon to return the scrip, but she said she had handed it to a priest, and he refused to part with it on the ground that 'it belonged to God.' A regular game of 'hunt the slipper' ensued, only the slipper was valuable scrip. Up to the present time, I do not know if the scrip has been recovered, but the convent and all the nuns were evicted by order of the Court.

Thirty Sisters of the Order of St. Gildas have come to Hill House, Langport, formerly the residence of the late Mr. Vincent Stuckey. Canon Baschelier, of the diocese of Nantes, who accompanied the nuns, said that a small number of the Order of St. Gildas was taking refuge in England as a consequence of the hospitality always extended by this country to French religious people. Hill House is a large mansion standing in its own grounds, and the Sisters are fortunate in obtaining such a comfortable home together with the rural seclusion which is always their chief desire.

Hill House had been for generations the home of the Stuckey family. After the late Mr. Vincent Stuckey's death, it passed to his son-in-law, Major Pinney, who disposed of it.

The people of Langport were amazed at the arrival of the French nuns and by the news that Mass would soon be celebrated under the shadow of their parish church. Canon Baschelier was asked why the Order had left France, and he replied: 'Because laws have been made which forbid us carrying on the teaching in the way we have hitherto done, and because our property has been confiscated by the Government. Our education was superior to that given in the State schools, which made it impossible for them to get on, and, in order to avoid competition, they closed all the schools where teaching was carried on by the religious Orders. In some parts of France, the people being in sympathy with the Orders, the military have had to be called out to keep the people from rising in rebellion. The only violence we suffered was the violence of the law, but rather than submit to that, we have come to England. Religious instruction is forbidden in the State schools of France by an atheistic Government, which will only give secular education. We taught schools where religious teaching was given, and as the people preferred our schools, that swamped the State schools.'

I leave this *ex parte* statement, with all

its inaccuracies, to the judgment of my readers. They will know that there were other grave reasons than those cited by Canon Baschelier which led to the expulsion of the Orders.

At Colchester a large body of nuns have lately settled, having removed from Ealing. Yet another section has arrived at Muswell Hill, where they have obtained a house and opened a chapel. Everything possible is done by these Sisters to win public sympathy and allay any suspicion which may exist. While against them personally there may be no grounds for complaint, there is, as I have shown, abundant reason for demanding the closest scrutiny of their unchanging system and its methods.

CHAPTER IX

EVILS OF THE CONVENT SYSTEM

THE whole convent system is at fault. It offers, almost provokes, the opportunity for iron discipline and heartless rule which leads to such punishments as those which disgraced a convent at Tours, concerning which I must give a brief quotation from a report which appeared in English newspapers last May. One would gladly leave out such matters, but people are so curiously ignorant of the very serious need for inspection of convents that I cannot omit this citation, which has unfortunately many parallels in convent life. A convent of refuge belonging to the Order of St. Dominic existed at Tours, receiving many of the girls who were wards of the Public Charity Board. These girls, usually orphans, were sent to the convent and their board and education were paid for by the Public Charity Board. Now, what happened to the poor girls

in this convent, where the 'good sisters' were supposed to teach and care for them ?

Let me quote from a report of what was revealed before the judge who ordered an investigation. The Commissioner of Police and two inspectors seized the following awful and suggestive things : 'Instruments of torture, strait-waistcoats, instruments for penal douches, and the palliasse of the dead.' It is hardly possible to read the full statement of what the police testified as to this convent. I could not soil this page with the diabolical cruelty and fiendish wickedness which the police mentioned to the judge. Remember, this was the evidence of the police, not of biassed anti-Roman Catholic witnesses or hysterical women. Terrified children in the convent had been compelled to sleep in the mortuary chamber on 'the palliasse of the dead.' Surely it was enough to qualify them to lie in the mortuary chamber as corpses? There was a cellar, constructed like an oubliette, used for disobedient girls, and other terrifying weapons of torture manipulated by these supposed 'holy women.' And this took place in a convent in France in the twentieth century! It makes one's blood boil with indignation to

read of such awful cruelty perpetrated on poor girls. We wax indignant about wicked torture inflicted on innocent women in Macedonia, and here across the Channel we have the record of such incidents as I have mentioned.

I will anticipate the remark often made by easy-going people, who say, whenever such a terrible instance of cruelty is cited: 'Oh, but that sort of thing could never happen in England.' What is there to prevent its occurrence? Things as dreadful have taken place in convents on British soil, and they are still liable to happen while these institutions are sealed to outside inspection and free from authority. A few months ago some orphan children, who attended a Methodist Sunday School in England, were secured by a Roman Catholic priest, on the ground that they could enter a Catholic orphanage without payment. Dr. Stephenson's famous Homes knew of the case, and the authorities were preparing to take the children, who were not wholly destitute, when they learned of the priest's action. Written statements were obtained from all the relatives to the effect that they wished the children to be committed to Dr. Stephenson's Homes and not brought up to be Roman

Catholics. After first refusing to part with the children, the Roman Catholic authorities were threatened with legal proceedings unless the children were handed over. 'The result was magical,' says Dr. A. E. Gregory in the *Children's Advocate.*

'The children were delivered up without the slightest difficulty, the priest mentioning to one of the relatives that it was out of the question to allow the case to go into Court as their orphanage had so many Protestant subscribers.'

Much evidence of negligence of children in Roman Catholic Homes has come under the attention of those who are interested in philanthropic work. There can be in such institutions little example of happy family life, owing to the law entailing single life on monks and nuns; and as there is hardly ever any public inspection of the methods of government there is an open door to harsh and careless discipline. Dr. Barnardo and other experts in rescue work could relate many instances where Roman Catholic priests have snatched children from Protestant environment, and have failed to care for them in the sympathetic and religious way which

characterises our great Protestant orphanages. Often the appeal has been to the poverty of the relatives, and offers are made to take the child for nothing into a Roman Catholic home. It is easy to see what a temptation it is to poor people to part with children under such conditions, but it is less easy to see why Protestants should divert their gifts to Roman Catholic organisations while there are splendid orphanages where a Christian training is provided under Protestant auspices.

A constant complaint had been that deaths and burials, as well as every other incident in daily life in monastic institutions, are shrouded in mystery. Allusion was made to the settlement of nuns at Clarence House, near Osborne, the late residence of Queen Victoria. Some months ago a nun died at this place, which had been christened 'St. Michael's Priory.' She was buried in the private grounds of the Priory. The incident aroused considerable discussion, and at last public action was taken. A communication was sent from the East Cowes District Council to the authorities at St. Michael's Priory, stating that in their opinion the burial-ground at Clarence House was not a proper one. In reply to this letter,

a London firm of solicitors wrote on behalf of the Priory to this effect—

'We consider this is a very serious statement for the Council to make, and in view of the fact that the Local Government Board have approved of the provision for the use of the land as a burial-ground, under the circumstances we shall advise our client to withdraw the offer contained in our letter of the 21st October so that the matter may remain *in statu quo ante*.'

The offer to which reference is made was to cease burying in this ground. On November 3, the same lawyers wrote to the Council:

'Following up our letter of the 31st ult., we write to say that we now have instructions to definitely withdraw the offer made on our clients' behalf in our letter to you of the 21st ult., as to the cesser of future burials in the burial-ground authorised by the Local Government Board. We hereby therefore withdraw such offer on behalf of the Lady Prioress at St. Michael's Priory, Clarence House.'

At the next meeting of the Council it was notified that it was the intention of the General Purposes Committee of the Council to communicate with the other authorities in the Isle of Wight on the subject. But I presume, from

THE EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH OF THE MONASTERY, APPULDURCOMBE.

the fact that the Local Government Board has sanctioned interments in this particular ground, no further opposition can be given. However, the incident will lead to stricter surveillance by local authorities, which are frequently defied by monastic institutions.

Before leaving this subject, it may be well to add the latest list of settlements of nuns. Irgsdon House, near Newton Abbot, has been secured by the Sisters of the Holy Ghost—(surely a blasphemous title for any community to assume)—who came to England from St. Brieuc. I hear there are about one hundred nuns in residence here. The Sisters of the Immaculate Conception have taken a house at Ilfracombe. The Sisters of the Sacred Heart have opened a boarding-school for girls at Paignton. The Daughters of the Cross have opened a similar establishment at Torquay. Other Orders which have obtained a home lately in Devon are the Daughters of Jesus and the Sisters of Charity of Jesus and Mary, who have settled at Marnhull, Launceston, and Newquay. A house in Tooting has been obtained for other nuns. Carisbrooke House, situated in the principal street of the village of Carisbrooke, to which reference has been made,

was formerly the property of one clergyman and the residence of another, before it was sold to French nuns who have transformed it into a convent. In addition there is a convent of the Order of St. Dominic about half a mile from Carisbrooke House, which has been the home of nuns for more than thirty years. They admit people to the services, and allow ladies to visit the convent. This is a favourite method for winning sympathy with nuns.

At Lanherne, in North Cornwall, there is a convent of the Carmelite Order. The nuns of this community are limited to twenty-one by the rule of the foundress. The ceremony of clothing a postulant was not long ago celebrated at this convent. After High Mass had been sung, a Prior, vested in cope and mitre, proceeded to the gate of the choir and addressed the young lady who was about to assume the habit of a postulant. He said that taking the religious habit was like taking up the Cross with the thought of bearing it to Calvary, to be nailed thereto on the day of Profession by the three religious vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience. After the habit had been blessed, the postulant retired

and assumed it. On returning to the choir she was invested with a girdle, scapulary, mantle, and veil, and then lay prostrate on a carpet bordered with flowers, while prayers were chanted over her. She then received a blessing from the celebrant, and the kiss of peace from the members of the community. Henceforward, she is dead to the world.

CHAPTER X

RECENT SETTLEMENTS OF MONKS

ALLUSION has been made to various settlements of Orders in Devonshire. Further details were given in a pastoral letter sent recently by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Plymouth. There is a note of exultation in it which may well attract attention. In this epistle the Bishop enumerates the different settlements which had taken place in his diocese during the past year, and the list (including several settlements of nuns) is a long one. At Wood Barton, near Kingsbridge, he says, the Trappist Fathers have completed their monastry of Our Lady of Compassion. The monastery is modelled on the plan of the Trappists' late home at Mont Milleraye in France. The estate covers six hundred acres, and the monks have been very busy in improving its appearance by agricultural development. The Brothers of St. Gabriel are ready to receive

deaf and dumb patients at Beaconsfield, Plymouth. Well may the Bishop of Plymouth congratulate himself on the extension of Roman Catholicism in his diocese. He says it is edifying to see the spirit 'with which these truly religious sustain their unjust fate without repining.'

The West of England has been in particular favour with the refugees, and in the fair county of Devon a large number of monks and nuns have taken up their residence. One of the homes of Benedictines is Buckfast Abbey, two miles from the town of Ashburton. Ever since the Norman Conquest, with certain long intervals, the Benedictine Order has had an abbey here, and to-day their existence is more prominent than it has been for a long period. A friend who visited the abbey not long ago sends me some notes on his experiences. On his way he met a monk driving a cart laden with coal, and later on he saw some monks busy with rakes and hoes clearing a growth of French beans. When they are engaged in agriculture the brothers wear coarse hats woven out of rushes, which must be less comfortable than picturesque. About forty-five brethren live in this community. The rule

of the Benedictine Order enjoins daily manual labour, and the brethren carry out this idea most thoroughly. They have been busy digging out the old foundations, and planning considerable extensions. The present settlement of monks dates back for about twenty-one years, and most of the members came from France. It surprises a visitor to the ancient abbey to find that it is lighted throughout with electricity; this is due to the knowledge and skill of one of the brethren who is an enthusiastic scientist. There is a note of austerity about the interior of the abbey befitting an Order whose members take the vow of poverty. Besides doing the work of the estate, the monks leave a portion of each day for intellectual study, and they have at two o'clock every morning a solemn service which all must attend. The public may attend the ordinary services in the little chapel, where about half the space is allotted to the brethren. Such is life in a Benedictine monastery in the beautiful valley of the Dart at the beginning of the twentieth century. After an interval of 365 years a Lord Abbot of Buckfast again holds office in the person of the Rev. Boniface Natter.

The residence of the ex-Empress Eugénie at Farnborough has been responsible for the growth of Roman Catholic institutions in that neighbourhood. At the present time there is a large collection of buildings which have recently received the new designation of 'abbey' by an edict from the late Pope. The Order of Benedictines has charge of the abbey and care of the mausoleum in which the remains of Napoleon III. and the Prince Imperial were deposited. The abbey stands on ground which was originally part of the glebe land belonging to the parish church. From the abbey there is a covered way to the mausoleum. Every year members of the Royalist party pay visits to the tomb of Napoleon, and Masses for the repose of the souls of the ex-Emperor and his unfortunate son are continually being said. Then there is St. Michael's Church, built by the ex-Empress, and only a quarter of an hour's walk brings you to the Convent of our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

Nor is this all, for there is, on the opposite side of Farnborough Road, St. Mary's Catholic High School. In South Farnborough the Roman Catholics have a day school and a new church, opened in 1902, of "Our Lady Help

of Christians." The Salesian Institute, adjoining the church, is an institution for orphan boys. Probably some members of an expelled Order will settle before long in such a congenial atmosphere as Farnborough possesses for Catholics.

Near Chatham, lately, a community of Jesuits have purchased some property with the idea of living there. The community of English Redemptorists has bought Windhill House and St. Katharine's High School, Bishop Stortford. The buildings stand in grounds of about five acres. Already they are planning also the erection of a Roman Catholic church close to the parish church. The foundation-stone was announced to be laid in July by Archbishop Bourne. At present, services are held in a temporary building, and the congregation numbers usually about eighty persons. It is stated that some of the attendants are former members of the Church of England.

CHAPTER XI

SUMMING UP

I HOPE I have written enough on this subject to arouse attention to the very real dangers of the present situation. These pages have not been penned in animosity to the religious faith professed by Roman Catholics, but in active opposition to the political and social dangers which are always associated with the Orders to which hospitality is being given by Great Britain on an ever-increasing scale. If Jesuits have been banished from nearly all the countries of Europe at different times in their chequered history, there must have been good reasons for the universal detestation of their system. It is no answer to say that there are many truly devout men and women in the ranks of these Orders. I admit that often the plots and schemes of the Orders could never be carried to success unless they were manipulated by

innocent agents acting under the commands of astute leaders. Authority such as is wielded by the Orders has a peculiar attraction for pious but weak people, and they readily submit to a complete domination which subjugates mind and body to the will of those at the head of affairs. Men and women who dared to possess a mind of their own would find such an immured and subordinate life too irksome to endure.

These Orders have not simply fled for refuge to Great Britain—they have a mission to perform, and already they are setting about their business with the cleverness and tact which always distinguishes them. I read in *The Tablet*, the official newspaper of the Roman Catholic Church in this country, how skilfully the monks who settled near Pwllheli are managing to impress the country folks. The paper says that Nonconformists are frequently at the services and listen with interest to the preaching. Believing as these monks and nuns believe, that Britons are wrapped in spiritual darkness it would be surprising if they did not labour to proselytise. On this aspect of the question I would only say that it is absolutely necessary for preachers

all over the land to speak out clearly as to the error of Roman Catholicism, and the degeneracy of every nation in which it is paramount.

Judged by the statistics relating to murder, for instance, the countries where Roman Catholicism is paramount show the largest number of cases of this crime. Professor Bodio, an Italian authority, has put on record in Mulhall's Dictionary the following analysis: "For every million inhabitants from 1876 to 1889 England had annually six persons condemned for murder. Scotland had five, and Ireland (where Roman Catholicism predominates) had eleven persons. Taking next the figures for the same period on the Continent, we have Germany with eleven persons per million annually; Belgium, 14; France, 16; Austria, 23; Spain, 83; and Italy, 75.' Writing on these statistics, a leading American says: 'Americans will think twice before they trust their children to the Church of the land of the stiletto and the vendetta.'

Then, turning to the intellectual results, the record of Roman Catholicism is equally unsatisfactory. Professor Mayo Smith gives these comparative tables in his book *Statistics*

and Sociology, and they are worthy of careful attention. 'In the Protestant countries,' he says, 'the percentage of illiterate people is: England, 13 per cent.; Holland, 10 per cent.; Scotland, 6 per cent.; Germany, 1·6 per cent.; Sweden and Denmark only 0·4 per cent.' But in Catholic countries we have: Italy, 47 per cent. of the people unable to read; in Austria, 38 per cent.; and in Ireland, 27·6 per cent. One could adduce many other proofs of a well-established fact that under priestly domination the people are kept as far as possible in illiteracy, and, as one result of this, they develop criminal tendencies. Education is one of the most potent enemies to crime. Every school that is opened helps to shut a prison.

M. Combes, the Prime Minister of France, was interviewed last December by a representative of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and he defined the position of the Government with regard to the religious Orders in these words :—

'England forgets one thing. Her religious sects leave out of their ideas the form and constitution of the Government. It is not the same thing in France. The clergy have struggled for thirty years to regain

the upper hand over civil society. They have attempted to do this by the means of education—in imposing their ideas on the young. . . . Our duty is to defend the Republic; we cannot give liberty to those who attack the form of Government. For twenty years we have not made a single law to advance liberty that has not been attacked by the Church. Our Education Bill, our military law, our divorce law, have all been hailed by the Congregations as acts of oppression. Neither the clergy nor the congregations are popular at all with the masses of the country. They regard them as the cause of their troubles. You are right in saying that France is becoming sceptical and indifferent. The majority of the Catholics are so in name only. The women still go to Mass, and some of the men, but these latter are influenced by habit and not by any kind of faith.'

These words of the statesman who has been chiefly responsible for the law expelling the Orders enforce all the statements which I have made. It is not for religious reasons so much as for opposition to the Constitution, that the Orders have had to leave France. What the Jesuits and others have done in France in plotting against the State will be repeated in this country, for they do all this as an act of religion to win merit for themselves. It is not because the Orders belong to the Roman

Catholic communion that their unrestrained existence in any country is objectionable and dangerous; but because the Orders are never content with prosecuting purely religious work, but are always engaged in machinations against the Constitution, especially when that Constitution is, as ours is, avowedly Protestant. Surely, if the Orders are held in suspicion by Catholics themselves, and are being gradually expelled from Roman Catholic countries, we in Great Britain ought to watch their increasing settlement in our land with distrust, and with a determination that these monastic institutions shall come under the argus eye of the State. At present the foreign Orders are making this country their refuge with no let or hindrance, and with the minimum of inspection or control. What would not be permitted on the part of any ordinary religious community is allowed to these Roman Catholic bodies, and their seclusion from notice is a condition which, I venture to assert once more, is a danger to the Commonwealth.

The mere expulsion of religious Orders from France will not prove of much service to that country unless it experiences what has

been termed the expulsive power of a new affection. There must be a wave of evangelisation passing over France before the firm foundation of true religion can be laid. There are hopeful signs of such a change in the throwing-off of the yoke of Rome by many priests and their congregations. But there is need for a wise and sympathetic education of such men and women as leave the Church of Rome, so that they may not simply renounce Roman Catholicism to fall into agnosticism or materialism. All that is being done in the direction of encouraging these new converts to Protestantism ought to receive the cordial support of Christian people in Great Britain.

It has been stated that an overwhelming majority of the liquor-sellers in the United States are Roman Catholics. Listen to these words from the lips of Archbishop Ireland concerning his co-religionists. He was in Philadelphia in 1893, and said : 'I have walked through the streets of the city, and looked over the doors of business and banking houses for Catholic names, and I am sorry to say found but few. But, oh, great God! what sorrow and bitterness came to my heart when I looked over the doors of our saloons and found on

nearly all of them Catholic names.' That is the statement of a Roman Catholic Archbishop, and it must have cost the good man a considerable effort to lay bare such a grievous state of things. The large Roman Catholic population of American cities is, as it is in Great Britain, a grade below the Protestant population in nearly every test of progress. The Roman Catholic religion holds its followers in subjection, and men under priestly government lose their power to rise. It preaches to the poor so hopeless a faith that its most devout followers are robbed of every incentive to lawful progress. The emigrant who rises to prosperity in America is frequently the man who renounces the Roman Catholic faith ; and of this type there are thousands annually who are utterly lost to Roman Catholicism within a month or so of their arrival in the United States. This enormous leakage is regretted by Roman Catholic authorities, but they do not draw the deduction which we draw that the English or Irish Catholic is glad and thankful to throw off his bondage as soon as he passes outside the immediate domination of his priest on this side of the Atlantic.

We are inclined in these days to a sleepy

indifference, miscalled tolerance, which permits all kinds of untruth and evil to be allowed existence without so much as a weak protest being made against it. We are disloyal to our Master, we are unfaithful to the light which has been streaming upon this country for many centuries and has called out of darkness millions of souls, when we fail to protest with all possible strength against all erroneous doctrines. Young people are specially susceptible to the colour and music and tradition of Roman Catholicism. They are tolerant of its ideas chiefly because they are ignorant of the actual and logical results of Roman Catholicism. An interest in ritual is more natural to a young man and woman than it is to older people, and the Roman Catholic Church gains its new adherents frequently from those who have begun in youth to walk down the sloping path which commences with Ritualism and ends with Romanism. Empty declamation against Roman Catholic teaching is not enough ; there must be detailed history and careful study of the whole question, in order that the next generation should not be led away by specious statements into surrendering the Protestant truth. If I might venture to suggest, I would say to clergy

and ministers that they should speak to their congregations on the chief errors of Roman Catholicism, the legendary and unscriptural ideas which it harbours, the political dangers which it produces, the unchanging animosity to freedom which it possesses, and its antipathy to all the movements which enfranchise the world.

It is no use assuming that your hearers know already these things ; our Protestantism has gone to sleep lately, and needs to be wakened. Again and again people have said or have written to me : 'Why trouble about innocent foreigners who have been driven out of their native land? Surely England has always welcomed the alien and proved to be a refuge for the distressed.' I reply to such a question that England is still ready to shelter the innocent and distressed, but, in the case of these foreign Roman Catholic Orders, I have yet to learn that they are either innocent or distressed. Any one who has done me the honour to read these pages knows that I have given examples of the cruelty practiced in convents, which are in many cases factories for unpaid labour to produce wealth for the Orders ; I have shown how the cupidity and dodgery of

monks and nuns have obtained immense sums of money and large estates, contrary to law; I have stated on undoubted authority the huge sums of money possessed by these Orders, invested shrewdly in foreign stocks; and I have tried to show how these Orders have earned their expulsion not because of their religion, but because they were 'enemies of the State.' 'Innocent and distressed!' It may suit the sentimental to call these monks and nuns by such misplaced adjectives, but any student of the whole course of history must refuse such absolutely unnecessary sympathy.

But what can be done? That is a question which needs to be put and answered. In the first place, there must be equality of treatment. Sir Godfrey Lushington, G.C.M.G., former Under-Secretary for Home Affairs, says: "In practice, religious houses are shrouded in secrecy. No one knows anything about them. The Home Office does not. Nor does the Local Government Board. Nor does Dublin Castle. Nor does Somerset House. The census gives no statistics showing the total number of religious houses and their locality, or the number of nuns, or the number of penitents, or the number of

inmates.' These words of so high an authority suggest to me the first line of action. Parliament should insist on a full return on the lines of Sir Godfrey's statement. First, let us have authentic and complete statistics, which would give a basis for other action. Next, we ought to press for thorough inspection of all monastic institutions in the country. Most of them are really factories, or workshops, and ought to be subject to the same rules precisely which govern ordinary factories, workshops, and laundries. Thirdly, no burials ought to be permitted to take place within the private grounds of monasteries and nunneries. All that the Home Office exacts from ordinary institutions and householders in the way of publicity ought to be exacted from these Roman Catholic institutions. All that the Local Government Board demands from ordinary inhabitants must be demanded from convents and monasteries. Somerset House and Dublin Castle, and indeed every local authority, must be as stringent in dealing with these communities as it is in dealing with the individual citizen. The law of the land must make no exceptions. The fact that these Orders are foreign ought to make it more incumbent upon

British officials to see that they comply with every requirement of the law.

They are far more powerful than separate individuals, and the methods some of these Orders have pursued abroad will not cease now that they have landed in Great Britain. Already the Roman Catholic electorate is being manipulated to gain for their Church certain favours in Ireland and England, and as the years go on there will be more of this. Great Britain must awake to the peril which this latest invasion brings, and must yield not one inch of Protestant ground to these foreign invaders who have been expelled from their native land as enemies to the commonwealth.

THE END

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